Notice of Allowability	Application No. 09/868,376	Applicant(s) BUDDE ET AL.	
	Examiner Albert T. Chou	Art Unit 2662	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to *June 1, 2005*.

2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are *1,3,4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 (Renumberred 1-7 respectively)*.

3. ☒ The drawings filed on *18 June 2001* are accepted by the Examiner.

4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
   a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
      1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .
      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

   * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
   (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
      1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
   (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

   Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____ .
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Adam L. Stroud on June 1, 2005.

The application has been amended as follows:

- Claims 2 and 9 have been canceled.
- Claims 1, 3, 4 and 5 have been amended as shown in attached sheets.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are allowed.

Reasons for Allowance

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Applicants have claimed the following uniquely distinct features in the instant invention, which are not found in the prior art, either singularly or in combination:

- *Each network node contains a test signal generator which delivers a test signal outside the assigned time slot*; and
- *Establishes that a circuit port in the assigned network node is defective when only during the assigned time slot the assigned test signal generator and another network node deliver a test signal and establishes that a circuit port in at least another network node is defective when during the assigned and the other time slot at least another network node delivers a test signal.*

The closest prior art, either singularly or in combination, fails to anticipate or render the above limitations obvious.

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Albert T. Chou whose telephone number is 571-272-6045. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 - 17:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hassan Kizou can be reached on 571-272-3088. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AC

Albert T. Chou
June 2, 2005

HASSAN KIZOU
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600

ATTATCHED SHEETS

Please amend Claims 1 – 9 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A network comprising a plurality of intercoupled network nodes, characterized in that the network nodes, controlled by a respective bus guardian, send messages during an assigned time slot and receive messages outside this time slot,
in that each network node contains a test signal generator which delivers a test signal outside the assigned time slot, and in that each network node contains a test signal detector which, after receiving a test signal from at least another network node outside the time slot, detects that there is a defective circuit portion in the assigned network node and/or in at least another network node, the test signal detector is also provided for directly receiving the test signal of the assigned test signal generator and in that a control unit in a network node

receives and evaluates the detection results of the test signal detector and

establishes that a circuit portion in the assigned network node is defective when only during the assigned time slot the assigned test signal generator and another network node deliver a test signal and

establishes that a circuit portion in at least another network node is defective when during the assigned and the other time slot at least another network node delivers a test signal.

2. (Canceled) A network as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the test signal detector is also provided for directly receiving the test signal of the assigned test signal generator and in that a control unit in a network node

receives and evaluates the detection results of the test signal detector and

establishes that a circuit portion in the assigned network node is defective when only during the assigned time slot the assigned test signal generator and another network node deliver a test signal and

establishes that a circuit portion in at least another network node is defective when during the assigned and the other time slot at least another network node delivers a test signal.

3. (Currently Amended) A network as claimed in claim ~~2~~1, characterized in that the control unit blocks the output of the network node in case of a defective circuit portion in the assigned network node.

4. (Currently Amended) A network as claimed in claim ~~2~~1, characterized in that the control unit in a network node establishes that the assigned test signal generator is defective when during the assigned and the other time slot a test signal is delivered neither by the assigned test signal generator nor by another network node.

5. (Currently Amended) A network comprising a plurality of intercoupled network nodes, characterized in that the network nodes, controlled by a respective bus guardian, send messages during an assigned time slot and receive messages outside this time slot,
in that each network node contains a test signal generator which delivers a test signal outside the assigned time slot, and in that each network node contains a test signal detector which, after receiving a test signal from at least another network node outside the time slot, detects that there is a defective circuit portion in the assigned network node and/or in at least another network node, ~~A network as claimed in claim 1, characterized~~ in that at least part of the network nodes are directly intercoupled via at least one star node,

in that the star node comprises a plurality of star interfaces which are assigned to at least one network node,

in that a respective star interface in dependence on a pilot signal transfers a message from the assigned network node to the other star interfaces or from another star interface to at least one of the assigned network nodes,

in that more than one star interface are assigned to at least one network node, of which only one interface transfers messages in dependence on the status of the assigned network node.

6. (Original) A network as claimed in claim 5, characterized in that each network node includes a pilot signal generator which generates either a pilot signal which indicates the whole assigned time slot or the beginning and end of the time slot.

7. (Original) A network as claimed in claim 6, characterized in that the pilot signal generator is also used as a test signal generator.

8. (Original) A network as claimed in claim 5, characterized in that the test signal detector also detects the pilot signal generated during the assigned time slot.

9. (Canceled) A network node in a network comprising a plurality of further intercoupled network nodes, characterized in that the network nodes, controlled by a respective bus guardian, send messages during an assigned time slot and receive messages outside this time slot,

in that the network node contains a test signal generator which delivers a test signal outside the assigned time slot, and

in that the network node contains a test signal detector which, after receiving a test signal from at least another network node outside the time slot, detects that there is a defective circuit portion in the assigned network node and/or in at least another network node.